29: Spiro--192-193 (1947-48) 1950 Woleaians
116, 159, 125 Ifalik-1-5

"October 19, 1947. Tarev has been cycloid in his behavior lately. He appears to be fairly adjusted for a few days and [193] then reverts to his fighting and delusions. Last night he took a long, heavy pole into his house, and worried everyone as to the use he would put it to. The women in his household had set out to take some prepared food to a family in mourning, but he would not permit them to go. Today, I attempted to give him some psychological tests. One of the tests was the Stewart Emotional Response in which the subject is asked what makes him happy, sad, angry, ashamed, and the like. The following is the result of the futile attempt.

Q. How have you been feeling lately?
A. I just had a dream of X [a chief who had recently died].
Q. Have you been feeling well?
A. I went to Tom's sister. She said I could not have the taro, since it belongs to someone else.
Q. Have you ever been happy?
A. I like what you say. When you talk I am happy, for your talk is like my talk.
Q. Have you ever been very sad?
A. I like you because you like this place. You came here, though it is very small.
Q. Have you ever been very sad?
A. Some days, when I don't like what people say.

Q. Are you ever afraid?

A. When I walk around.

Q. Any other time?

A. When I want to walk around, someone always tells me to stay where I am and not to go away.

Q. Have you ever been angry?

A. When I want to go some place, and someone tells me that I can't go.

Q. Anything else?

A. I'm never angry.

Q. Have you ever been ashamed?

A. I don't talk to the women of this place because I am afraid.

Q. Yes, but have you ever been ashamed?

A. I took the wife of another man. Now I don't like that woman; I don't talk to her because I don't like her. I would like a woman to come to me, but only to talk to. I don't want to look beneath her skirt. I don't like the women of this island.

Q. Why?

A. My stomach does not like them.

Q. Would you like to have sexual intercourse with them?

A. No. One woman came to talk to me; I always remember her. I wanted to marry her, but Tom did not want me to.

Q. Why don't you like the women here?
A. My stomach doesn't like them.
Q. Why not?
A. She came to me; I talked to her. I wanted to see her genitals. God told all the people, a long time ago, to copulate. But I don't want to.
Q. Is there anything you want?
A. No.
Q. Is there anything you like?
A. No.
Q. Do you like Tom?
A. No.
Q. Do you like Maroligar?
A. When he talked bad to me, I did not like him. Now he talks good, I like him.
Q. Do you like the chiefs?
A. I am afraid of the chiefs.
Q. Do you like Arivimae [his son]?
A. Yes, very much.
Q. Do you like your mother?
A. Yes.

Q. What did you do with the pole you took last night?

A. Two men were talking and I was afraid. I took the pole and brought it into the house. If they come to fight me, I can fight them. Now somebody has stolen the pole.

Q. What did these men say?

A. Wasugu, waisuk. [These are nonsense syllables. Tom said it must be the speech of the alus.]

Q. Do you still see the smoke you told me about?

A. No.

Q. Is there anything you would like to tell me?

A. Yes.

Q. What?

A. If you want to tell me something, not to shout or to fight, I will listen to you. If anyone else goes someplace, the people do not talk bad to him, but they talk bad to me.

Q. Do you still think of that place in the North?

A. I like the North very much. A very fine place. When another man calls me, I go there.

Q. What man?

A. I don't know.

Q. When did he call you?

A. Yesterday. He came and called me. I walked around in circles, walked around and around, and then fell down. Then that man came and walked around me. I stood up, and I saw the North.

Q. What did you see?

A. Tom's brother came. He said, 'Don't go; stay here.' I was very angry.

Q. Why do you like the North?

A. I don't know. The alus possesses me; he knows that place.

This interview came to a close by the arrival of a number of men, and Tarev would not continue to talk."

41: Bates & Abbott N-5 (1953) 1958
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gauge wasn't unpacked and set up yet. A stiff wind came up in the afternoon and kept increasing in force. Late in the afternoon Tom came by with Maroligar, the number two chief. Tom pointed out across the lagoon to the west and said, "Maybe typhoon." Maroligar seemed somewhat worried as well. What the two wanted, apparently, was a weather prediction—from us newcomers to the tropical Pacific! It showed a touching and completely misplaced faith in the famous "American know-how." I was in charge of the meteorology department and I peered at the thermometer (79°F at 5:45 P.M.) and barometer (1005 millibars) but I was unable to draw any deductions from these helpful facts.

In the evening, quite a number of men gathered in back of the Fan Nap, clearly worried about the weather. Maroligar borrowed one of the big Navy battery flashlamps and learned how to turn it on and off. He wanted some sort of a light so that if the weather worsened during the night, he could round everyone up and lead them to some safer spot, perhaps the boulder ridge on the windward side of the island—the highest spot, some fifteen feet above sea level. The houses were mostly along the lagoon shore and Ted remembered that waves had reached to the Fan Nap on his previous stay, with a wind of considerably less than typhoon violence. Don and I read what there was on typhoons in the books we had brought along, and I tried to remember what I could about the characteristics of Caribbean hurricanes—but nothing helpful came out of this.

The wind settled down to a steady blow, and I comforted myself, going to sleep, by thinking that hurricanes struck suddenly, after a period of still, oppressive heat, so that this slow build-up of wind could hardly be dangerous—misinformation, but none-the-less comforting.

The next day, Saturday, started out cold, with a completely overcast sky. But the rain had let up, so we sallied forth to begin work. Our first project was to make a census of the people on the island. Ted had made a census on his 1948 visit and he wanted to get a record of the changes. For Don and me, the census would be an essential basis for our studies of "human ecology." Further, if we made the census our first item of business, it would give us an opportunity to meet all of the people on the island.

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Ted, of course, was in charge of the census operation. Tom acted as interpreter. Fagolier, the paramount chief, and Marolīgar, the number two chief, went along, giving the highest possible official sanction to the procedure. The party also included a young man named Bakalimar—shortened to Bakal for ordinary purposes—who had been assigned by the chiefs to work with us, acting as general handyman and, most importantly, as dishwasher. (We did our own cooking; or, perhaps more accurately, our own can-opening.)

We were also accompanied by Tony. Tony was from the atoll of Ulithi, some 375 miles northwest of Ifaluk. He was a young man of perhaps eighteen, and had come to Ifaluk with his younger brother on the trade ship, some months before our arrival, to visit relatives. The Coast Guard had a station on Ulithi, where Tony had worked, and where he had learned fluent English. He was of no use as an interpreter in the census operation, however, because of his lack of familiarity with the Ifaluk household and clan arrangements, and because his youth made the questioning seem almost impertinent. The job required the maturity, dignity and local knowledge possessed by Tom. Tony's name, Antonio, was official, because Ulithi had been converted by a Roman Catholic Mission some years earlier—a process that included the adoption of Christian names.

The houses of Ifaluk were all on the two largest islets of the atoll, Falalap and Falarik, which were separated by a shallow and rather narrow pass. The Fan Nap, near the southern end of Falarik, was roughly in the center of the inhabited area. We started the census with the southernmost houses of Falalap, with the idea of working gradually northward until the count, household by household, was finished.

Three households—twenty-six people—were catalogued that first morning. Tom and Ted would lead the way into a household area, going inside if it was drizzling, or sitting on mats in the open during dry intervals. The available people of the household would gather about—and the available people included all of the men, all of the children except those who got scared at the strange activity and ran away, and all of the women except those under temporary quarantine in a menstrual hut.

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Menstruating women on Ifaluk, as in many cultures, were subject to a variety of taboos. There were four special houses on the atoll which served as menstrual huts for each of the four villages into which the households were grouped. A woman, at the onset of menstruation, retired to one of these, removed from the ordinary life of the community until her period was over.

The census-taking was not a rapid process. It took interminable palavering among Tom, the chiefs and the members of each household to get a list of names, with clan affiliations, marital status, and such-like lore dear to the anthropological heart. When the list was complete, Don supervised the weighing and taking of heights—the only physical measurements practical with the available equipment. The weights were taken on a set of ordinary bathroom scales that had been picked up in Guam. The measuring pole was less prosaic—made from a pole found in the Fan Nap and calibrated to the nearest quarter inch by marking with a ball-point pen. Maroligar officiated at the weighing and measuring; after he had watched the first two or three operations, he explained to each person where to put his feet on the scales, tried to persuade him to stand up straight for the measuring, and coaxed the shier women and children into cooperating.

In the meantime I would prowl around with the big Crown Graphic camera, snapping whatever caught my interest, and popping flash-bulbs to the delight of the children who had a new toy in the used bulbs.

There was plenty of time to look around while Ted was trying to get all of the names and relationships straight. We noticed that the houses were well built, with big posts stuck in the ground to which stringers and rafters were firmly lashed with stout coconut-fiber rope; the roofs were coconut thatch, and the walls were mats woven of coconut leaves. The houses were low, and people did not stand in them, but sat or sprawled on the floor, which was very clean and covered with plaited coconut mats. There were no windows as such, but each house had four to six doors, which could be closed with more coconut mats when desired. The interiors were dim—but there was no need for good reading light. There was little or no clutter on the floor, except for a few things propped against the walls. Most of the family posses-

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353 sions were put in bags or boxes of various sorts and slung by ropes from the rafters, the whole upper part of the house thus being a sort of floorless attic.

123 125 The citizens of Ifaluk cooperated nicely in the census operation, though they seemed rather amused at such strange antics. Those who had been weighed and measured loved to stand around and watch the rest as they passed through the routine. It was hard to get some of the [516] people, especially the women, to stand up straight enough for a proper height measurement. They had, in many cases, what seemed to be a permanent crouch, perhaps resulting from the low doorways and interiors, perhaps the product of a sort of chronic deference, since the women of Ifaluk knew their place—always bowing respectfully in the [600] presence of the male animal. (Ted suspected that this show was super- [560] ficial and that the women, there as everywhere, knew their power and how to use it; one of the five chiefs, it turned out, was a woman.)

291 There were no ideas of modesty associated with the breasts; and the ladies didn't seem to be bothered by the fact that their skirts gaped rather badly near the belt-line behind. But they were very modest about legs from the knee up and were careful never to expose an inch of thigh. Their preoccupation with keeping their skirts close about their legs was clear enough as they stepped on the scales. Don, impressed by their modest maneuvers as he tried to read the dial on the scales, remarked that they would really be shocked by an American bathing suit.

855 861 The people seemed to take wonderful care of the children, the men holding babies and comforting the young as often as the women. Ted and his colleague, Spiro, in their 1948 study, found that the kids were never spanked, and rarely yelled at—though it was said that they sometimes doused them in the lagoon if they got too obstreperous. At the movies on the NETTLE Don noticed one man gently ladling sea water on a bawling baby. The baby stopped crying quickly—and he made a mental note to try this on his own daughter when he got back home.

854 The smallest infants were in cradles. These were square boxes with low sides, fastened by a bridle of cords from the corners, and suspended a few inches above the floor by a rope from the rafters. The babies were tucked in with some old clothes, and seemed contented enough.

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were tucked in with some old clothes, and seemed contented enough.

In general, the people had fine physiques, and seemed very healthy. There was one woman who looked like an albino with freckles, and another old woman had her nose and upper lip completely eroded away, probably from yaws. Yaws was once prevalent in all of these islands, but it yields quickly to penicillin injections and during the post-war period of American control, the Navy medical service instituted an effective campaign of yaws control.

After the first three households had been completed, the party waded back across the shallow pass to "home" at the Fan Nap for lunch. The weather kept us in for the rest of the day. The sky had been completely overcast all morning, with occasional drizzling rains, but without strong wind. In the afternoon the wind became steadily stronger. It started to tear coconut fronds, even green ones, from the trees, and the coconuts themselves were being blown off in large numbers. Don noticed one coconut fall at an angle of about thirty degrees from the vertical in the wind, and he figured that the wind had the force of eight or nine on the Beaufort scale—gale force.

About four o'clock Maroligar and some other men came around to the Fan Nap and lashed poles and boards across the open western end, where it faced the lagoon. A tent that had been unpacked but not set up was dragged over and lashed to the poles, nicely cutting out the wind and rain and making the interior fairly snug and comfortable. But the noise of the wind and waves outside kept increasing. A typewriter could not be heard four feet away, even in this snug interior. (Ted was typing up his notes from the morning, impervious to typhoons.)

We kept worried eyes on the barometer and on the wildly swaying palms. Men everywhere were out battening down their house walls with matting, and running great ropes from the gables, making them fast to the bases of nearby palms. Maroligar, hovering about the Fan Nap with obvious concern about the guests on the island, made it clear that if things got much worse we should move in to one of the houses farther from the shore.

Then suddenly, about five o'clock, the worryings and speculations were disrupted by a wave of excitement. An airplane had been

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but they were anxious to learn more. Don proposed a sort of trade with Yani of English lessons for Ifaluk lessons. This developed presently into a regular session, every second or third night, with about a dozen of the young men of the island in attendance. I soon dropped out. The English-Ifalukian exchange thus became Don's enterprise: he had a special interest, since he would be staying on after Ted and I left.

By next morning (Sunday) the wind had pretty much died down, and the census operation was continued. About noon, a Navy ship was sighted off Falarik. The walkie-talkies were again unlimbered and contact was established. It turned out to be a destroyer escort, calling by the island to check typhoon damage. They sent in a rubber landing boat with a half a dozen men who spent about an hour wandering around the island trading cigarettes for shells, and then took off. It began to look as though Ifaluk, instead of being isolated in the remote Pacific, was a busy crossroads.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and finally the census was completed —or at least the first draft of the census. We made out a detailed list of all of the people, household by household, with a copy for each of us, and we kept making small changes all summer, finally making a complete recheck at the end of the summer to be sure we had everything straight. When I think of the trouble we had keeping track of 260 people, I get a new insight into the problem of census operations in a country like the United States. "Census" will never again be just a word.

The Ifalukians did not count years, and consequently did not know exactly how old they were. They did, however, have a series of words for age groups: saugau for infant, sari for child, tarimwan for young man, liveirik for a girl past puberty, and so forth. Old men and old women were called tufai and there were a number of old people on the island: twenty-eight men and thirty women in the tufai class, to be exact, so that about a third of the population was in the old age group. Some of these, including Tom, were adults at the time of the 1907 typhoon, so that they must have been in their sixties at the time of our visit: but they were healthy, vigorous and obviously enjoying life.

Ted asked each woman of childbearing age how many children she had had, how many were still living, and—for those that had died—

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123 but I was glad I tried because it gave me a direct experience with
585 Fagolier as dance director. He squatted by the fire and the line of
643 men formed opposite him against the dark backdrop of the coconut grove. To get some glimmering of what to do, I had to watch both Fagolier and the men in the line beside me, and I gradually got the feel of the situation. The dance involved a series of gestures with both hands, and of vocal sounds that varied from hums to shouts but that did not seem to form word patterns. Fagolier directed this with a remarkable economy of gesture, the indications of his hands being translated into full scale action by the men opposite. He was acting as leader and coordinator—again quietly, skillfully and economically.

121 These thoughts about Fagolier were precipitated the morning that Don started his food study of the Falepenach household. Don was resolved to be as exact about this as possible. It is very difficult to get precise figures on what people eat under any circumstances (think of the problem of measuring everything scraped off the plate into the garbage can, or of finding out whether Johnny got into the cookie jar this morning, and how many cookies he snitched). But, Don reasoned, the greater effort you made to be precise, the nearer you were likely to come to truth in your measurements. So, with the complete and invaluable assistance of Yani, he started out to measure everything eaten in Yani's household, Falepenach, for a month.

125 It developed at once that I was about as helpful as a sore thumb
262 in this process. That first morning Don and Yani weighed all of the breadfruit and all of the coconuts brought in for the day's use. Then, to get a measure of the difference between crude and finished product, they waited around while the breadfruit and coconut were being prepared for cooking. Clearly I wasn't needed for either the weighing or waiting processes, so I drifted off to sit down by Fagolier and contemplate the horizon. Don, in the meanwhile, found (among other things) that twenty husked, ripe coconuts, weighing 27 lbs. 5 oz. produced 11 lbs. 13 oz. of copra ready for use in that day's cooking operations in Falepenach.

121 We had been talking about the problems of the food study from the
262 beginning. A careful study of what people ate, how much, how they got it, how it served them nutritionally, was clearly basic to any at-